Sects. II-37—100,000—31-8-42.

Development (1958) Department.

MS SERIES.

G.O. No. 4834. (Ltr No)

Dated 25.9.58

[Despatch Abstract.]

Labour - International Labour Organisation Report - First item on the agenda of the second session of the Industrial Committee on Textiles - views of the Madras Government - Communicated to the Government of India.

BY AIR MAIL

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
Ministry of Labour.

No.L.C.38(1)/48 New Delhi, the 4th Sept. 1948.

From

Rai Bahadur Sadashiva Prasad,
Deputy Secretary to the Government of India.

To

The Secretary to the Government of Madras ,
Labour Department.
Madras.

Sir,

Sub:- General Report - First item on the Agenda of the Second Session of the International Labour Organisation Industrial Committee on textiles.

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I am directed to forward a copy of the International Labour Organisation General Report - Item 1 on the agenda of the forthcoming Second Session of the International Labour Organisation Industrial Committee on Textiles - and to request that any later information than that available in the report and observations of the Provincial Government, if any, may please be communicated to this Ministry as soon as possible but not later than the 25th September, 1948, as the meeting opens at Geneva on the 29th October, 1948, and the brief for the Indian delegation should be prepared in time. The attention of the Provincial Government is particularly invited to page 14 and page 95- of the report which contains a reference to the standardisation of wages.

XXXXXXXXX
Yours faithfully,
(Sd/Sadashiva Prasad.)
Deputy Secretary to the Government of India.

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Development Department.

Letter No.Ms. 4834 dated 25-9-48.

To

The Secretary to the Government of India,
Ministry of Labour,
New Delhi.

Sir,

Sub:- Labour - International Labour Organisation General Report - First item on the agenda of the second session of the Industrial Committee on textiles - Views of the Madras Government - communicated to the Government of India.

Ref:- Rai Bahadur Sadashiva Prasad's letter No. L.C.38117/48, dated 4-9-48.

Cont.

I am directed to enclose a note containing further information and observations of this Government on the International Labour Organisation General Report.

Sd.....
24-9-48.

To
Copy to the Commissioner of Labour.
(with enclosure).

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Development Department.

COMMENTS ON THE GENERAL REPORT.

With reference to the stadardization of wages referred to at pages 14, 95 and 96 of the I.L.O. General Report under the award of the Industrial Tribunal for the Textile Industry in the Madras Province (Rao Bahadur M. Venkataramayya) a basic minimum wage of Rs.26/- per mensem for an adult unskilled worker has been fixed for a month of 26 working days. Before this award, wages in the textile industry were low and divergent. The minimum wages of an worker varied from Rs.6/- to Rs.11/- p.m. and these differences led to many labour disputes. Hence a uniform minimum basic wage of Rs.26/- per mensem for each unskilled adult worker fixed for this Province. When this was done there was an uproar from the employers that the industry could not bear such a heavy burden of higher wages and many of them threatened to close down their mills. There was a reasonable ground for this objection as the employers had recruited labour indiscriminately over and above the normal required strength because the wages were th low and labour was cheap. This had been recognised by the Tribunal, who had recommended the standardisation of occupational nomenclature in the textile mills and fixation of workload for each worker. This entailed the fixation of the ~~workload for each worker~~ number of workers required for each department in each mill before the minimum wages could be fixed for the different categories of workers. The Government therefore appointed a standardization committee, to determine the following points:-

(1) Categories of workmen in each mill;
(2) Duties which are performed by the workers concerned;
(3) Qualifications necessary for employment in the category;
(4) Relationship of the particular worker to other workers in the mill;
(5) Workload to be assigned to each worker;
(6) The various forms of nomenclature now obtaining in different mills in the Province which are synonymous with the nomenclature proposed by the Committee;
(7) Personnal required in the different departments of the spinning mills of 12,000 spindles and weaving mills with 300 looms.

The Committee accordingly submitted its report to the Government on the several issues mentioned above. The report was approved by the Government.

When the recommendations of the Standardisation Committee were sought to be implemented in the several mills the managements of the mills had to weed out the excess labour

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and retrench uneconomic workers according to the strength fixed by the Standardization Committee for each department in a textile mill. This was resented by the workers and their labour unions which insisted that there should be no retrenchment whatever. In spite of categorical assurances from the Governmen and the employers that surplus textile workers would be absorbe in the mills by working extra shifts, there was a general strike in all textile mills in Coimbatore, Salem, Trichy and North Arcot Districts. The Strike lasted from 20-1-48 to 23-3-48. After several negotiations and advice to the managements of the mills and the labour unions, a settlement was effected under which the workers were to accept the standardisation proposals, while the surplus textile workers were to be found alternative employment. Work is proceeding on this basis and production has considerably increased.

A standardisation uniform list of basic wages based on diffentials for the different occupations was also found necessary. Workers will not only have to be guaranteed an adequate minimum basic wage, but also they have to be paid according to their skill, ability and productive power in the different categories in a mill. The employers have met the situation by evolving a graduated scale of payments themselves. The question whther a wage Board's recommendations in this connection should be implemented is under consideration.

It is mentioned at page 13 of the International Labour Organisation Report that the wages and conditions or employment for workers in industry are settled by collective bargaining between employers' and workers' organisations especially in the United Kingdom. Such a method of settlement particularly that of wages, may not be possible in this province at present so long as the managements and the workers' unions look upon each other with suspicion. Though settlement by collective bargaining should be the most appropriate way of settling wages, it may not always be possible of adoption.

This Government accept the principle of equal remuneration for equal work but consider that wages in the textile industry should not be disproportionately high as compared with wages in other industries. As it is, the total emoluments of an unskilled worker (man or woman) amount to about Rs.60/- which is more than the wages in most other industries including agriculture.

With reference to the paragraph concerning increase in production in India at page 11 of the Report it may be stated that 29 mills in the Province have started three shifts, mainly in order to absorb the retrenched workers who were thrown out of employment when the proposals of the Standardisation Committee were emplemented.

With reference to the paragraph on page 25 of the Report relating to provision of canteens for workers in India, this Government consider it desirable to run industrial canteens, as far as possible on co-operative lines under the supervision of the managements, any deficit in the canteen budget being padd by the employer. A uniform procedure seems desirable of adoption in all the mills in running canteens.

With reference to the information at page 29-30 of the Report on the welfare measures provided for workers in industry India, some mills provide education, public Health and recreation facilities even now. Some mills have also provided houses for workers. The Madras Government have proposals under consideration for constructing welfare centre with facilities for sports, swimming pool, reading room, library, gymnasium etc. at Coimbatore a textile centre. The managements

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managements have also under consideration proposals for coopei tive Housing Schemes for workers.

With reference to the paragraph on transport arrangements at page 31-32 of the Report this Government ~~eons~~ consider the provision of transport arrangements for workers from their houses to the mill and back desirable where practicable, as workers often have to cover 3 to 4 miles to reach the workplace.

Safety questions:- Individual Motor Drivers:- Factories of recent origin have installed individual motor drivers, and old factories have begun to effect the change whenever suitable electric motors become available.

K.G.Menon,
Joint Secretary to Government.

True copy/

Superintendent,
MadrasRecord Office.

NG.28.

15.1.54